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## EIU Community Donates More Than \$12,000 for Hurricane Victims

*Oct-14-2005*

Representatives from throughout Eastern Illinois University's campus gathered Friday to donate more than \$12,000 to the American Red Cross to assist victims of Hurricane Katrina.

The campuswide fund-raising effort, called Paws for the Cause, set out to raise \$10,000. In the end, that goal was exceeded, and \$12,239.60 was given to the Red Cross' Disaster Relief Fund.

"Eastern, you've done a fantastic job," said Student Body President Ryan Berger of Grayslake. "My heart is exploding with joy for the things that I have watched people do."

EIU students and employees' fund-raising efforts included selling Mardi Gras beads at football games, walking around campus with donation buckets and holding coin drives.

"I felt an inner peace when I walked the campus with buckets telling our fellow students what we as a campus were trying to accomplish in raising money for the hurricane victims," said Keila Lacy of Chicago, EIU's student vice president for student affairs. "And it made me proud to sell beads during Family Weekend at the football game and have one of the parents of an EIU student say they were glad to have sent their child to a school that cares about the world around us."

Bill Lovekamp, a faculty member in EIU's sociology and anthropology department, was on hand at the reception as a Red Cross volunteer.

Lovekamp said he witnessed an outpouring of concern from EIU students in the aftermath of the hurricanes that battered the Gulf Coast.

"A lot of the students in my classroom were asking, 'What can we do?'" Lovekamp said.

Shanda Forinash, another local Red Cross volunteer, was thrilled with the Paws for the Cause endeavor.

"The Red Cross is extremely grateful for the efforts of the Eastern community in getting this donation together for us," Forinash said. "It's the support of people that makes it possible for the Red Cross to do what we do."

For information about volunteering with or donating to the American Red Cross, visit its website at [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org).



Representatives of several groups from throughout the EIU community present a check to local American Red Cross volunteers during a reception to recognize the university's Paws for the Cause effort, which raised \$12,239 for victims of Hurricane Katrina.